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ABSTRACT

A major concern of educators in Illinois and elsewhere is that students be given the opportunity to master the basic skills of reading, communication, computation, and problem solving. It is important for school districts to recognize this concern on a local level by including in the program plan for their districts student goals which mention skills in critical thinking, listening, speaking, creative or leisure time pursuits, responsible communication in our democracy, and the awareness of self-importance in human relations. These skills should begin to be developed in the elementary and middle school and continue through high school and beyond. As part of the language arts program in Illinois schools, speech/theatre courses can effectively help meet educational goals established by the districts and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The speech/theatre discipline can be effective and timely to present and future educational goals as well as create skills and attitudes that relate to all other learning areas. (SW)

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COMMUNICATION IS GETTING IT TOGETHER

by

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December 6, 1973

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Communication may be regarded as a game in which sender and receiver battle against the forces of confusion.

Norbert Weinen
The Human Use of Human Beings

Office of the Illinois State Department of Public Instruction
Speech/Drama Division

CS 500 859

I. Introduction

The study of human communication has had a long and proud history. One of the earliest texts known to man, The Instruction of Ptah-ho-tep and the Instruction of Hegemeni: The Oldest Books in the World - Translated from the Egyptian, gave practical advice to the men of 2500 B. C. on persuasion and public presentations. However, it was the Greeks in the fourth and fifth century B. C. (Aristotle, Isocrates, Socrates, etc.) who classified speech education as an essential tool for active citizens in a democracy. It was also the Greeks who enjoyed a high systemized theory of drama which is still revived today in productions across the country.[2] The models of speech criticism and drama established by the Greeks and further enlarged upon by the Roman rhetoricians remain the foundations for speech education today.

These foundations have actually changed very little through time -- except for the last twenty years.[3] It is to this subject of change and new directions that this paper is addressed. A brief review of the influential theories or methods of teaching will be applied collectively to the various speech areas which have developed (oral interpretation, radio and television, discussion, debate, public address, and theatre) in elementary, middle, and high school curricula. Not included will be the area of speech correction. Extra-curricular speech activities so important to the "promotion" of speech in the school curriculum will be referred to only as they directly relate as co-curricular speech activities.

II. Theories of Approaches

The "curriculum theories" to be discussed in relation to our present status of speech education will be: Classical or Rhetorical Theory, the Elocutionary Movement and Interpersonal Communication Theory.

Classical or Rhetorical Theory

Rhetorical Theory, unalterred since Grecian times, has been the dominant method in speech instruction on all levels.[4] The method seems in today's context to be a very stiff and formal treatment for the modern student. Rhetorical education has always rested on the assumption that forms of mass public performance is necessary for a proficiency to develop. Thus, the theory in more modern times has sometimes been referred to as the Public Address Theory. According to ancient rhetorical analysis, there are five procedures to be used for evaluation of performance: Invention, Arrangement, Style, Memory, and Delivery. As the Roman, Cicero, explained Aristotle's theory:

> Invention is the discovery of valid or seemingly valid arguments to render one's cause plausible. Arrangement is the distribution of arguments thus discovered in the proper order. Expression (style) is the fitting of the proper language to the invented matter. Memory is the firm mental grasp of matter and words. Delivery is the control of voice and body in a manner suitable to the dignity of the subject matter and the style.[5]

This theory is still evident, especially in the forms of co-curricular coaching in areas of declamation, oratory, and debate; and in the classrooms of speech teachers who received their degrees before the mid-sixties. Rhetorical

Theory puts the emphasis on the speaker with his formal preplanning and his "speech."

SPEAKER ——————→ (MESSAGE) ——————→ listener

Elocutionary Movement

The Elocutionary Movement emerged (1750-1800) from an emphasis of the Rhetorical cannon of delivery.[6] Actually one could argue that the Elocutionary Movement is so close to the Rhetorical that it should not be considered as a separate development. However, the examination of the delivery of a speech was so specialized that it went beyond any limits or suggestions ancient rhetoricians used. The vocal delivery and body delivery were controlled with strict rules which became even more important than the content. For approximately 150 years speech education was in the control of professional elocutionists who had a narrow view of its educational value, but elocution did reflect the times as exemplified in the evangelists' pulpits and on the politicians' stumps.

Drama, of course, reflected this elocutionary movement as well with the actor's projection of "stage voices" and "melodramatic takes" (somewhat like the acting seen in silent movies). Much of our speech education today is still suffering from the "rules" of delivery which tend to hamper effectiveness of modern, more informal communication. Example: The old-style politician whose main campaign tactic was a formal, elaborately-worded public address delivered with flourish of gesture and broad emotion is now replaced by a low-key campaigner who must talk softly and use a minimum of gesture before a TV camera as well as create sincere "informal" and unplanned sessions where he "appears" to speak off-the-cuff in small, intimate group set-ups.

→ SPEAKER (MESSAGE) ——→ – Delivery Methods – ——→ LISTENER

Interpersonal Communication Theory

Within the last decade a new emphasis has spread among speech educators. This "movement" away from the tradition of rhetoric has as one of its sign posts the changing of a word symbol in the title of its national association. (The Speech Association of America is now the Speech Communication Association.)

The word "communication" seems to sum up the shift in thought. The speaker is no longer more important than the listener. People in our mechanical age are struggling to remain "human" people. As Giffin and Patton stated, "Our automated, complex society has created a growing state of impersonality and the yearning for closer personal ties is one of the major themes of our times."[7] Of course, the basis of our "personal ties" or human transactions is in the communication we establish with those around us. Its relevancy and significance for us cannot be overemphasized; however, schools have always attempted to teach students to read and write acceptably. A few have even attempted to teach students to be "orators" in the Elocutionary spirit, but until recently, few have attempted teaching competency in transacting human communications, so much a part of our everyday lives.

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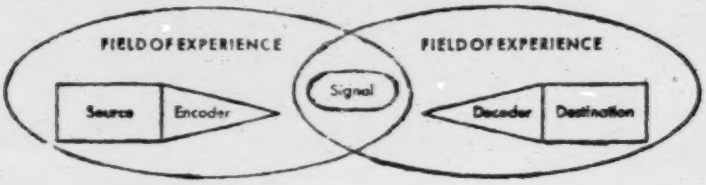
There has been a recent "rush to the publisher" for communication-oriented texts, but it is found that many of the earlier ones in the mid 1960's were Rhetorical or Public Address texts retitled which allowed rhetoricians to scream "academic fad" and "old theory, new names!" in the reviews.

As Giffin and Patton state, "the older, more traditional view of communication usually focused on one (or a combination) of two objectives: 1) To tell them what I know or believe, or 2) to get them to see things as I do."[9] The teacher of interpersonal communication certainly goes beyond this point. Simple models can express the idea that the total process is now emphasized rather than emphasizing just the speaker or delivery. In Communication Theory, the interpersonal relation, the overall product of understanding between humans is the important factor.[10]

The following are various popular models of how the Interpersonal Communication Theory exists in our lives. The various drawings reflect the transactions between and within human beings and they provide the best definition of how all parts of communication interact together and equally (none being more important than the other) to form a process of interaction which is continuous and on-going in society -- everything affecting everything else.



Schramm's Model[11]

SOURCE — (SPEAKER)
ATTITUDES

ATTITUDES
RECEIVER — (LISTENER)
The Galvin Model (elaborated)*[12]

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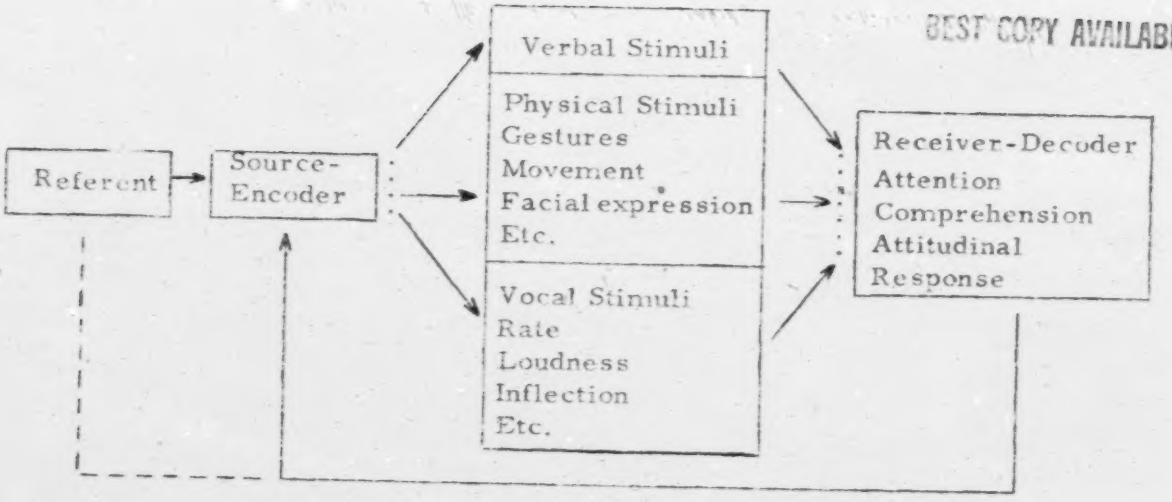

Miller's Model[13]

SOURCE	MESSAGE	CHANNEL	RECEIVER
Communication Skills	Elements	Seeing	Communication Skills
Attitudes	Structure	Hearing	Social System
Knowledge	Content	Touching	Attitudes
Social System	Treatment	Smelling	Knowledge
Culture	Code	Tasting	Culture

Berlo's SMCR Model[14]

In comparing these various interpretative drawings of the Interpersonal Communication Theory with those of the Rhetorical and Elocutionary Theories, perhaps the differences in approach can be noted easily. The whole communication process and all that is involved with it is important -- not just the speaker and his methods or delivery techniques.

III. Present Status of Speech Education

General Overview

The most apparent shift of present speech education is in purpose. The study of and ability to speak in public has been the most valued educational achievement since Grecian times. The man who could speak well could defend himself and participate in any direct democratic situation. Thus, the educational system reflected this need in the Rhetorical approach. Today, reflected in all levels and speech subject areas, the purpose of speech education is shifting in the direction of an understanding of self relationships with others, and a development of a critical thinking process. This shift demands a much more informal setting and group of daily activities than the Rhetorical Approach. However, most classrooms in speech still reflect a cross in approaches. This is basically because most teachers find it difficult to break out of their traditional training. Their behavioral goals and activity plans all sound good in planning time or on paper, but it is very easy for them to revert and immediately assign

students a "formalized" introductory speech which blocks careful attempts of directing the classroom attitudes away from oratorical practice. Likewise, the cross in approaches is also seen in many "communication" texts which are Rhetorical or Public Address texts with "communication" inserted into the title and once or twice in a chapter heading or introduction. A teacher with intentions of shifting to the Interpersonal Communication Approach may be hampered by choosing a new text which is really traditional in direction, but has all the "correct" labels for Interpersonal Communication.[15]

Elementary

Grade school children for myriads of years have been learning how to read and write, but it wasn't until this century that educators became concerned about elementary students learning the oral aspects of their language. Yet the most common understanding of "speech education" or "oral language" at this level has been involved with the speech correctionist. A former executive secretary of the National School Boards Association stated, "One of the greatest fallacies in modern public education is the general belief that speech education is concerned primarily with teaching students the mechanics of pleasant voice production."[16] Elementary classrooms still echo the old elocutionists' "how-now-brown-cow" gymnastics and they all know the boy who stood up on the burning deck when they are visited once or twice a week by the traveling itinerant "speech" teacher. The regular classroom teacher tends not to bother with oral language except in "recitations." After all, everyone knows when Johnny enters school that he can talk, so teachers can forget about that and concentrate on why he can't read, add or subtract, form letters, or name the capitals.[17] Johnny can talk, but can he relate to others' communications; is he inconsequential and constant in language; is he providing a base for inadequate or negative adult talk? Overstreet in The Mature Mind states, "In no area of our maturing ... is arrested development more common than in the area of communication .... The person who is mature in his communicative powers is noted as an exception to the rule. The person who is immature -- halting, clumsy, obscure, rambling, dull, platitudinous, insensitive -- is the rule."[18]

Recently, more emphasis has been placed on oral language in the elementary school curriculum. This is due partially to the increased role of communication in our technological world and partially to psychological and linguistic research (Thorndike, Gagnel, Jenkins, Staats, Carroll, Luria, Yudovich, Vygotsky) emphasizing the importance of oral language on learning and thinking. However, because of the "specialist" teacher employed for communication study, it is difficult in the classroom to relate "speech and listening" activities to all other aspects of the children's studies. These activities then become a separate "game" to the students unless teachers can "interdiscipline" and make use of the oral language study as basic in aiding learning in all other disciplines. One development of how to accomplish interdisciplining might be creative dramatics. Basically, the purpose of this activity is to develop expressive abilities, aesthetic appreciation, imagination, organization, and cooperation among students.[19] By letting a student make up his versions of stories and acting them out with other students or developing pantomines to express feelings on experiences in poetry, for instance, the teacher could use the activity to go further and deeper into other disciplines of study. For example, students could express

their science study by using objects (bottle of stardust, a map, model of a space ship, etc.) given by the teacher, who then offers open-ended questions encouraging students to act out their reactions to the questions and objects. The daily newspaper could be used to develop nonverbal expressions concerning headlines as the teacher asks open-ended questions. Directions and prepositional relationships (up, on, between, etc.) can be creatively acted out with puppets. Historical events can be reenacted by students and then changed somewhat so that students could see what would have been different as a result of a slight change in the historical event (opposite side winning the battle, different person winning an election, etc.)[20]

More and more the elementary curriculum demands a regular classroom teacher (or a "daily" specialist) who can effectively make use of communication games, creative dramatics, activities in discussion -- varieties of informal techniques and activities to create a positive attitude in children's minds in relation to their use of their own personal language and self -- so that communicative skills and attitudes can be plugged into every other curricular subject area. The start is now being made in this area, but the teaching methods are still presently crossed (traditional usually comes out of initial innovative attempts).

Examples of schools:

Alton Elementary
Project Speak, East St. Louis
Wheaton - Briar Glen Elementary
Evanston - elementary district

Middle School

As developments and changes occur within the university curriculum, they begin to filter through the high school levels and gradually are incorporated into the middle school curriculum. Thus, in middle schools today various "speech" courses are being added gradually, especially in the departmentalized systems. The courses, however, are are usually survey in approach, including separate performance units on articulation, interpretation, discussion, debate, parliamentary procedure, and public speaking.[21] It would seem that the middle school might be missing the "communication" revolution, stuck "in the middle" of creative developments in high school and elementary school, and is getting the "left-overs" or "used" programs which secondary schools are passing down.

During the summer of 1972, a survey of the status of speech education in junior high schools in Illinois was conducted by Shirley Stoll, Coolidge Junior High School in Granite City. Out of the 40% return, 45% were located in northern Illinois, 32% in central Illinois, and 23% in the southern portion of the State. The curriculum profile drawn from the information received indicated that 8% require a basic speech course, 11% provided an elective speech course, 41% incorporate a basic speech course in English, and 39% offer no speech program. The size of the school seemed to make no difference as to whether a speech course was offered or not. In addition, 43% of the schools offer some form of extra-curricular activities (plays, speech contests). Only 14% of the speech teachers had a minor or major and the training for most indicated a strong public address (Rhetorical Theory) background. Only

6% are teaching speech full-time.[22] Only 12% have ever made some use of creative dramatics -- and then only in speech class. Again, the crossed approaches in teaching speech (traditional vs. Communication Theory) is evident, but the traditional approach is far more prevalent on this level as a general rule than other levels. What is most obvious though is the lack of speech training either as public address or integrated and interdisciplined Interpersonal Communication.

Examples of schools:

Coolidge Junior High, Granite City
Elgin Junior High
River Trails District 26
Woodridge District 68
Dirksen Junior High, Calumet City
Johnsburg Junior High, McHenry
Moline - Coolidge Junior High
Wilson Junior High
East View Junior High, Bartlett
Freeport Junior High, Freeport
Monroe Junior High, Wheaton
Bloomington Junior High
Assumption Junior High
Armstrong Junior High, Jacksonville
Hoopeston Junior High
Addison Junior High, Macomb
Greyville Junior High
Belleville - Belleville West Junior High
Central Junior High

Secondary

1. Basic Speech Instruction in High School

"For over fifty years, official spokesmen for secondary English teachers have said that basic instruction in speech was part of the general English curriculum." However, questions concerning what should be taught, how should the subject be taught, on what level should it be taught, and who should teach it have generally plagued attempts at instituting a specific oral language instruction especially in smaller schools.[24] Speech instruction is considered to be part of the language arts program, but it has never been successfully incorporated into an English class as a survey unit or as an oral book report. Thus, as Piche stated in remarking about the split of English and speech subject areas, "And so, divorced more than fifty years ago, the decree legitimized separate residences, but we have never really arranged a satisfactory property settlement."[25]

That "property settlement" is getting closer, however, with the advent of such curricular innovations as developing mini-courses, team teaching, and shortened elective subject units in the "language arts programs." Speech teachers in Illinois (being part of their language arts departments) have provided leadership in designing a separate semester of oral communication study as part of the English basic requirement in the freshmen

or sophomore years. More and more high schools in the State are adopting this idea as an answer to providing their students with a course that will help them organize thoughts, express ideas clearly, provide critical thinking techniques, develop successful interpersonal relations, and open themselves in all other aspects of their high school careers. Objectives or goals like these have been (ideally) listed in high school guide books, on CSPI directives,[26] and in educational journals, but finally, educators have found a way to put these into practice in a speech course. "By tradition, speech instruction sought to teach people to give speeches, act, direct, announce, and read aloud."[27] These are all talents which are not often used in adult life by the common man, but now a basic speech course does not necessarily have to deal with the fine points of performance for a mass audience. In a semester course in oral or interpersonal communications now required and given English credit in a growing number of Illinois high schools, a more human approach is explored. The fear that this approach might mean required participation in an "ENCOUNTER GROUP" threatening and ruining students' perceptions is not true.[28] Content for study could include:

I. Introduction Activities:

A. The initial attitude created is very important to the success of the "informal" classroom arrangement. A freedom of expression should be allowed in the room. Students should get to know each other and the teacher as quickly as possible. Students from the first should be encouraged to "communicate" and participate.

B. Get-acquainted Games and Tests.

C. Impression Formation Activities.

D. Discussion of <u>their</u> definitions of communication.

E. Use of pairs, joining to make small groups, and eventually reporting (1 - many communication) on other introductory communication subjects.

F. Compilation games to establish the various ways we communicate.

G. Nonverbal activities.

H. The start of a personal communication notebook or log.

I. Use of literature throughout the course can be instituted. (Example: Bradbury's <u>Sound of Thunder</u> to understand "process" and change in man and his environment.)

II. The Communication Process:

A. Establishing the parts and interrelationships of parts of communication.

B. The building of diagrams or 3-dimension models showing how the process of communication mechanically works.

C. Role-playing where and why breakdowns in the process occur.

III. Transactional Communications and Self-Concept Building Activities:

A. Games People Play.

B. Experiments with forms of transactions between people.

C. "Who Am I?" Questionnaires and comparisons.

D. Drawings of "Self" - or diagrams of important happenings.

E. Imagination activities and psychological games.

F. Interviews with people like and unlike themselves.

G. Discussion on individual differences.

H. Astrology?

I. Defining roles you play during the day.

J. Defining effects pressures have on your communication.

K. Defining strong beliefs, their effects, and origins.

L. Analysis of family background and its effects on the student's life.

M. Projects revealing self as they see themselves and as they feel others see them.

IV. Semantic Activities:

A. Games in connotative/denotative meanings.

B. Establishing that language has different meanings to different people through games (password, inkblot tests, etc.).

C. Experimenting in inventing new words or language systems.

D. Individual projects or activities in the effects on communication of culture, personality, regionalism, stereotyping, allness, bypassing, fact/inference/judgement problems, abstracting, incompleteness, and how words change in meaning through the years.

E. Use of literature. (Example: Use the play Apple Tree to discuss Adam and Eve's problems in naming objects.)

V. Listening/Perception Activities.

VI. Organization Activities:

A. Games at organizing symbols to create sense for them.

B. Discussion of methods of organization used every day.

C. Outlining steps (organizing) for clarity.

D. Use of various clarifying and supporting devices.

E. Sample outlines involving various research techniques.

VII. Discussion Activities:

A. Consensus activities and games.

B. Formed groups begin to learn to work together through games, role-playing, problem-solution activities, and brainstorming problems.

VIII. Final Projects Choices:

A. Speech -- any type.

B. Ad projects.

(VIII. Final Projects Choices - continued)

C. TV programming.

D. Group -- audience participation debates (usually the most popular).

E. Discussions.

F. Etc.

All of these areas would involve student-centered activities and game experiments with as little "lecture" or "recitation of reading" as possible. Little objective grading can be done on this individualized level -- many subjective techniques are employed. The emphasis should be on the need for students to experience the application of these concepts to his life roles, his interests, and his other areas of study. Thus, interpersonal communication can be a basis for an interdisciplined approach to all learning. The Illinois Speech and Theatre Association has written a proposal advocating this very idea to offer all Illinois high school students an opportunity to have a course of this nature. The proposal is also approved by the Illinois Association of Teachers of English.

Momentum toward a "speech" requirement has built up only in the last fifteen years. In comparing an Illinois study of high school speech done in 1958 (sponsored by the Illinois Speech Association) and one done in 1969 (sponsored by Illinois Speech Association and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction), it can be noted that the following significant developments occurred:

1. There is a trend to offer a basic course in speech.
2. Accompanying the above more and more high schools are also requiring the course (but not necessarily for graduation).
3. Although the course is offered, it reaches a relatively small percent of the total student enrollment in the State.
4. The basic course content emphasis has shifted more towards "activity" learning.
5. Of the content areas usually covered in a basic class, "organization" is given the most emphasis.

Although no formal study of Illinois high school speech courses has been started since 1969, the trends to offer speech electives and require a basic course have seemed to increase at a much faster rate. Also, the required course in most cases, seems to be the "interpersonal" course rather than one with the public speaking approach. Public speaking now is usually taught as an advanced elective for students with special interests or talents in that direction.

2. Advanced Speech Courses in High School

High schools which have established a required basic course (or at least offer it) usually are creating more of an interest and need for advanced special interest courses in speech. This is especially true in institutions where mini-elective speech courses are available to students for English credits The list of titles of these types of courses is impressive rivaling the university speech departments' catalogs. Offerings include:

Public Speaking
Advanced Public Speaking
Debate (several courses)
Persuasion and Social Control
Radio-Television
Discussion
Mass Communication
Film Production
Business Speaking
Parliamentary Procedure
Communication Theory
Logic and Reasoning
Salesmanship
Oral Interpretation
Forensics
Etc.

These of course, can be greatly individualized for the students. Fifteen years ago only a few of these titles were seen on a high school level.

3. Co-curricular Activities in Speech

Co-curricular activities which are directly connected with the goals and objectives of the advanced and basic courses include experiences in:

INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

Interschool competition/Festival participation/or Intramural competitions in the following events:

Duet acting: Humorous
Duet acting: Dramatic
Dramatic Interpretation
Humorous Interpretation
Verse Reading
Prose Reading
Extemporaneous Speaking
Oratory
Radio Speaking
Reader's Theatre
Special Occasion Speaking
Original Comedy
Oratorical Declamation

DEBATE

Interschool competition and Intramural competition.

Schools with active co-curricular programs can build their speech programs easily and thus continue to develop stronger co-curricular teams in much the same way athletics operate. Many principals are seeing the need to develop co-curricular programs in speech to offer students alternatives to

the more traditionally accepted activities in athletics and music. Once a co-curricular program is established, course offerings in speech usually are not far behind. Sometimes the activity program can offer the practice and experience from the theory offered in the courses for those students with a more individualized interest in a certain activity or activities.

4. Theatre Courses and Activities on the High School Level

Theatre curricula like those in the speech areas are so closely related to the co-curricular activities of play production that it is difficult to talk of them separately. Usually the activities were developed first and then student interest resulted in the development of courses. The recent moves of high schools toward developing mini-courses and advanced special electives with English credit (like the speech development) has also helped extend the scope of course offerings. Twenty years ago progressive schools might have offered a general course entitled "Dramatics" which would have surveyed the whole field of theatre appreciation with little application. However, the great majority of schools would not have had that, but probably would have produced a junior and senior class play primarily for the purpose of raising money for the prom or class gift. It would have been directed by whomever was unlucky enough to get the class sponsorship.

Today in wealthier districts in Illinois, theatrical facilities and equipment rival professional theatres. With more theatre-offerings training interested students, the co-curricular activities have progressed to a high quality of professionalism in artistic production beyond believability. (Attend the State Dramatic Contest at Bloomington High in March to see for yourself). The difficulty and quality of material attempted has also gone beyond expectations of most university theatres. Because of this, attitudes are changing. No more can one expect to view the "high school" quality acting and technical productions of a few years ago in the schools that are striving to build their programs with qualified staff. Since the entire production of a play can involve many students on an individual level, theatre can be viewed as a needed co-curricular activity (along with football and band) in the high school experience. Because of theatre's more individual appeal and the so-called lack of need for it in the basic curriculum, the majority of theatrical courses offered twenty years ago were given no credit. Now it can be seen that theatrical study involves many disciplines in its content -- practical content which can be taught in an exciting, dynamic way: Creative writing, analysis of literature, means of individual expression, applicable use of artistic talents, diction, study of the psychological analysis of characters, concepts of criticism, mechanics of construction, etc. Examples: The study of understanding a character and his relationship with others in a plot situation before an actor can act has relationship to psychological analysis and motivations as well as literature analysis of structure and plot development; the study of set design has direct relationships with talents in artistic design, mechanical drawing, creative imagination, and the use of color and line to create style or mood -- all analyzed from the written play; the study of make-up is not the smearing of greasepaint, but must also be analyzed from the written play to reflect the personality and the character's meaning and relationship to the play. Therefore, make-up must be designed by an artist, a sociologist, and an analyst. What is being said is that theatre as an art form expresses man's feelings and ideas in a creative process of many parts which all work for one

solid effect of mood and style for an audience. Since it is an art form involving many varied types of artists for the one effect, it is open to interpretation, not only by the artists involved, but also the audiences. Thus, when leaving a play or movie, audience members get many different reactions. The following approaches to theatrical studies are:

The Dramatistic-Sociological Approach

> Theatre is the study of man through an exploration of his specific acts in time and space by means of an investigation of the actor, his means, and his end.

The Communication Approach

> Theatre is effective communication by means of structured images of situations in time and space.

The Participatory Approach

> Theatre is a process by which an actor and his plan, a spectator and his expectations and responses create an event through mutual interaction.[29]

Advanced elective course offerings in theatre like the list in speech include a variety of special interests for the actor, spectator, scene builder, artist, director, etc. Here are some of the offerings:

Stagecraft	Scene Design
Acting	Make-up
Directing	Lighting
Improvisation	Costuming
Advanced Acting	History of the Theatre
Children's Theatre	Puppetry
Theatre Business	Oral Interpretation
Reading in Dramatic Literature	

These of course are mini-course specializations. Usually these have resulted in interest from perhaps just one survey (full-year) course called "Dramatics;" and it is not just the large schools that are instituting this, although they are leading the field. English credit is usually given because of the heavy amounts of writing and literature analysis involved in these courses. These programs seem to be building with a rapid rate involving many types of students who now have an outlet for an artistic talent and who now can fulfill a need for group participation in an activity demanding responsibility and discipline. Schools just beginning to expand their theatrical offerings usually have a course in Acting/Directing and one in Technical Theatre. Then their program is built from there with courses feeding more talented, experienced students into the co-curricular productions for practical application experience and in turn improving the co-activity as well. Of course the larger the school, the more chance a student interested in theatre will have to get qualified teaching in the area, a variety of offerings, and proper facilities. Relatively few schools in comparison to "speech" development in the State have attempted to build their

theatrical offerings, but the trend is developing even though it is slow. Once the basic course in speech introduces interested students to the activities and possibilities of the field, the probability of extending advanced speech and theatre courses will be higher.

Examples of High Schools with strong Speech and Theatre Curricula:

Evanston
East Alton-Wood River
Decatur high schools
Peoria
Barrington
Wheaton high schools
Thornton South
Thornton-Fractional South
Arlington Heights
Belleville, West and East
Niles, East and West
Maine South
Thornwood

IV. New Directions

There is one premise that needs to be understood before school boards will readily institute speech into their curriculum. That premise is "... that speech is learned, and, because it is learned, can be taught."[30] Too often people feel that once you learn to talk, you have mastered communication skills. This idea must be eliminated if the study of communication is to continue growth. Also, signs blatantly announcing "No Talking!" need to be involved in meaningful relationships with their teachers and subjects -- they need to listen to each other and question each other and think with each other.[31] Unless they understand and become involved in the communication process, they are missing part of that relationship with their learning.

Communication study is such that to be made practical, it must be used as an integrated study -- one involved with and helping with every other subject c course of study. As Dorothy Higginbotham stated, "Whenever speech has become a separate area of study, it has tended to emphasize differences rather than similarities in reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills."[32] The idea of integration of various subject areas with speech was also mentioned in the D-1 booklet (already cited) published by OSPI in 1971. Such a fusion as the use of oral interpretive skills to appreciate and understand literature is a specific example of how integrating speech skills can be meaningful.[33] Social Studies offer many exciting possibilities for team teaching with speech in persuasion courses, human relations courses, current events courses, etc. Speech-communication teachers need to be concerned about how to develop the interrelationships of speech beyond their courses.

Certainly the trend mentioned in this paper toward the interpersonal Communication Approach in teaching the basic speech class on the secondary or middle school level is a medium to show interrelatioships. This direction away from public speaking as the organization of the basic course (boring to a teacher sitting listening to speeches day after day and boring to students who are speaking on assigned non-individualized areas, and who might never use an ability to speak before an audience again) is a move which will promote speech curriculum expansion. Keeping public speaking on the list of possible elective courses for those students interested will make that course more meaningful. The interpersonal course should have a developed philosophy and definite behavioral objectives for the teacher and student with evaluation procedures defined in the preplanning.[34] It should not be a course that is so

loose in structure that the students as well as the teacher have no sense of purpose or accomplishment. Individualization methods should be built into the course to provide for students' needs, special problems, and interests. This individualization should encourage the integration of other subject fields with the student's speech study. Florida has provided an example of replacing a semester of sophomore or freshman English with a communication course.[35] Illinois is heading in this direction. A positive goal of education, mentioned in OSPI guides, school districts' plans, and student goals, will be met once the students of Illinois get a chance to have the opportunity for training in communication transactions.

A development of the above type requirement is already seen on the secondary level, but it needs to be broadened and the middle school level needs to be developed further to feed into the curriculum of the secondary schools. The middle school has been neglected and not included in plans created by teachers in the secondary who do not usually even know who teaches speech or if speech is being taught in middle schools. Teachers need to establish through their school districts more of a sequence plan of study rather than remaining on separate levels.

Likewise the same is true with elementary districts. Much more experimentation is needed to develop and integrate all elementary subjects with speech and creative dramatic techniques. Little has been done to properly train classroom teachers in methods and materials. The speech professional organizations need to do more work at this level and define what method or methods can establish good communication elements of listening and oral expression.

The development of mini-courses to teach advanced or special speech/theatre arts skills is progressing well. Schools with strong co-curricular activity programs need to make sure they are not using their advanced courses for the sole purpose of feeding their trophy cases. The advanced courses should further enhance the needs of the students.

One basic element determining the success of a program is the teacher. OSPI is now experimenting with a set of objectives for the training of competent teachers of speech/theatre arts programs without proper staff to support it. There are too many examples of untrained teachers of speech in our State. One basic reason is that one can qualify to teach speech under the A160 code with only eight hours in speech or related speech/theatre course work. It is the untrained speech/theatre teacher who puts out the mediocre productions and who gives movements like interpersonal communication techniques the bad connotations. They are not trained to handle these areas. Perhaps they can sit and listen to informative speeches or keep discipline during a rehearsal, but can they properly teach interreactionships and (non-textbook) skills? Here are the statistics from studies done in 1969:

38% of the speech teachers in Missouri do not have even a minor in speech.

44.6% of Nebraska speech teachers have 6 hours or less in speech.

14% of speech teachers in Indiana have 5 hours or less in speech.

25% of Michigan speech teachers have less than a minor in speech.

Approximately 16% of Washington speech teachers have had no speech training.[36]

60% of all speech teachers in Illinois have had no training in speech education. Of those teaching the basic speech course in Illinois high schools, 81% have had fewer than 6 hours of speech.[37]

It is hoped that the Illinois statistics have changed for the better since 1969, but observation of high schools indicate they have not improved that much. Evaluations of speech programs and personnel (or lack of them) need to be established. Very few evaluations of speech programs are conducted now to find the unqualified speech teachers while recent graduates with speech/theatre majors cannot find jobs.

V. Summary

For the Extension of the Language Arts Program

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction holds that a major concern for students in Illinois is that every student should be given the opportunity "... to master the basic skills of reading, communication, computation and problem-solving, ..." and that the school program "... provide experiences which result in habits and attitudes associated with citizenship responsibilities."[38] It is also noted that the school districts in Illinois recognize this concern on a local level by including in the Program Plan for their districts student goals mentioning skills in critical thinking, listening, speaking, creative or leisure time pursuits, responsible communication in our democracy; and/or the awareness of self importance in human relations. Some years ago William O'Connell wrote in The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals that "... speech education helps to develop thinking, articulate participation and consciousness of responsibility ..." and urged more attention to improving speech education.[39] The May, 1973, issue of that same journal is still calling for revamping the methods of achieving basic communication skills.[40] Thus, any expansion or extension of the required language arts program could logically involve oral communications according to the President of the Illinois Association of Teachers of English.[41] The trend in many schools is to include the following basic units in a course of this type: Speaking and listening situations, semantics, problem-solving discussions, and organization with the objectives of helping students develop critical and analytical abilities as well as improve speaking skills.

There is a need today for humans to learn to communicate more effectively when dealing with problems of living in our age of communication. As part of the language arts program in Illinois schools, speech/theatre can effectively help meet educational goals established by the districts and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The proud history of the disciplines and their effect on humanity should not be minimized nor overlooked as being "an extra course if time, teacher, and classroom is left open." The Communication Approach to the teaching of the speech/theatre disciplines is finally "getting it together" with modern educators. The discipline can be made very practical and timely to present and future educational goals as well as create skills and attitudes that can relate to all other learning areas.

Footnotes

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